



Feinstein-Boxer Amendment to MilCon/VA Appropriations Bill Would Ensure Santa Rosa Island Remains Open to Public

November 14, 2006

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) today announced that the Senate has approved their amendment to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill repealing a provision in the FY2007 Defense Authorization bill that sought to restrict public access to Santa Rosa Island.

Senator Feinstein is the ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.

“Today, we cleared a major hurdle in the effort to repeal Representative Hunter’s provision that would have allowed private hunting to limit the use of Santa Rosa Island by the general public,” Senator Feinstein said. **“With this amendment we can ensure this beautiful part of the Channel Islands National Park remains open and its wildlife will be enjoyed by all for years to come.”**

“This amendment corrects a terrible mistake that should never have been made in the first place. With today’s victory in the Senate, we are one step closer to protecting Santa Rosa Island and keeping this natural treasure open for Californians and all Americans,” Senator Boxer said.

“I want to thank Senators Feinstein and Boxer for continuing to work with me to protect public access to Santa Rosa Island,” said Representative Lois Capps (D-Calif), who represents the coastal area where the islands are located. **“Their amendment to repeal Chairman Hunter's proposal to continue hunting on Santa Rosa Island indefinitely will ensure that the public will be able to enjoy full access to its National Park.”**

Senators Feinstein and Boxer’s amendment repeals a provision, sponsored by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), which effectively limited public access to the island by extending the practice of allowing privately organized deer and elk hunting expeditions. These hunts require the closure of about 90 percent of the island to the general public for about four to five months each year.

Representative Hunter’s measure also prevented the National Park Service from carrying out a court-approved settlement to remove non-native deer and elk from Santa Rosa Island by

2011. According to the National Park Service, the deer and elk herds pose a threat to the island's 11 endangered species, including the bald eagle, rare plants, and native birds and fox.

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